

SAMHSA Block Grants

What are the Block Grants?

- The Block Grants are grants given to States to allow States to address their unique behavioral health issues.
- There are two block grants, the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant (SAPTBG) and the Community Mental Health Services Block Grant (MHSBG).

What is the purpose of the Block Grants?

States will use the Block Grant (BG) program for prevention, treatment, recovery supports and other services that will supplement services covered by Medicaid, Medicare and private insurance. Specifically the BG funds will be directed toward four purposes:

- Fund priority treatment and support services for individuals without insurance or for whom coverage is terminated for short periods of time.

Fund those priority treatment and support services not covered by Medicaid, Medicare or private insurance for low income individuals and that demonstrate success in improving outcomes and/or supporting recovery.

Why are the Block Grants Changing?

- In lieu of changing health care systems, laws and knowledge and conditions in States, the Block Grants have followed suit.
- SAMHSA's proposed changes to the FY 2012/2013 Block Grants seeks to get State behavioral health systems ready for 2014 when more people will be insured through Medicaid or 3rd party insurance. Under this new approach States and territories will have the opportunity to use block grant dollars for prevention, treatment, recovery supports and other services that supplement services covered by Medicaid, Medicare and private insurance.

Currently two of SAMHSA's block grant programs (Mental Health Services and Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment) have been administered somewhat differently by different SAMHSA Centers, and States have had differing structures for accepting, planning and accounting for these grants. In an effort to streamline the application and reporting procedures for these block grant programs, SAMHSA has developed a uniform application and reporting process to promote consistent planning, application, assurance and reporting dates across both block grants. Among the changes to the block grant application is the expectation that States will:

- Take a broader approach in reaching beyond the populations they have historically served through block grants

- Conduct a needs assessment and develop a plan that will identify and analyze the strengths, needs and priorities of the State's behavioral health system – painting a fuller picture of the States behavioral system that we previously did not have.
- Design and develop collaborative plans for health information systems—grants and other funding.
- Form strategic partnerships to provide individuals better access to good and modern health services
- Focus more on services in support of recovery from mental health and substance use problems.
- Focus their block programs on improving accountability for quality and performance of services they provide.
- Description of tribal consultation activities.
- Fund primary prevention – universal, selective and indicated prevention activities and services for persons not identified as needing treatment.
- Collect performance and outcome data to determine the ongoing effectiveness of behavioral health promotion, treatment and recovery support services and plan the implementation of new services on a nationwide basis.

To view the Arkansas Mental Health Block Grant contact the Division of Behavioral Health Services for the current year's password which will allow access to the Block Grant Application document.